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WLW
CINCINNATI

FORTUNES WASHED AWAY

115
P.M. - E.S.T.

A SERIES OF DRAMATIZATIONS OF BETTER LAND USE.

No. 191

THE BERKSHIRES OF OHIO

December 20, 1941.

ORGAN: DEEP RIVER

VOICE

We took it for granted that land was everlasting;

We said ownership of the land insured security.

Tools would wear out, men would die --

But the land would remain.

ORGAN: ABRUPT DISCORD

ANNOUNCER

Fortunes Washed Away!

ORGAN: DEEP RIVER, fading behind....

ANNOUNCER

Geauga County, the Berkshires of Ohio, is a truly New England community of the mid-west. Its New England character is evident from the solid frame farm homes and barns, the rolling, heavily-wooded farm land, the village parks, and the conservative but up-to-date farm folk whose ancestry traces back to early settlers who came from Connecticut and Massachusetts in early 1800 to settle this part of the Western Reserve of the Connecticut Land Company.

ORGAN: Sneak in popular theme from FINLANDIA

Q. J. T.

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V.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

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ANNOUNCER (continuing)

Twenty-five percent of Geauga County is forested, much of it in maple sugar trees, which provide a substantial part of the farm income. Geauga County produces about 30 percent of the maple sirup in Ohio. Here, in the rolling, forested hills of Geauga County, Ohio, is the scene of the 191st consecutive episode of Fortunes Washed Away.

ORGAN: Up and out.

ANNOUNCER (cold)

Our story today is the story of how Geauga County farmers have banded together to increase income from their forests, and to practice conservation farming. Our story begins January 30, 1940....(FADE)...

SOUND: Meeting noises, men's voices, fading as gavel raps....

HAAS

Let's come to order now men.

SOUND: Chairs scrape, bustle of coming to order...

HAAS

I think all of you men, as members of the forestry committee, know what we're here for. Now I'm not going to make a speech. We'll just talk this over among ourselves.

KIBLER

Charley, it's been awhile since this committee met. Maybe you'd better bring us up to date.

VOICES

Yeah, tell us, Charley; go ahead, etc.

HAAS

All right! All right!

KIBLER

Tell 'em about the Pitt-Craft woods, Charley.

HAAS

I will, Ernie. But I'll get to that in a minute. (PAUSE) First of all I'd like to say this: Income from woodland products now ranks fourth in our county. It should be higher, and it would be if our woods were better managed.

KIBLER

I feel like Archie Newcomb. We've got to stop this clear-cutting.

HAAS

Absolutely. Unless public sentiment is turned against woodlot slashing, gentlemen, we'll all live to see the decline of this county, and I don't mean maybe!

VOICES

You're right, Charley; that's tellin' 'em, etc.

KIBLER

Aren't you going to tell 'em about the Pitt-Craft woods, Charley?

HAAS

Yes, Ernie. (PAUSE) Gentlemen, the Pitt-Craft woods has been sold and will be clear cut!

VOICES

What a shame; that's awful; fine woods to be destroyed, etc.

KIBLER

Just think, men -- 200 acres of virgin beech, and maple, and tulip ash.....

HAAS (Interrupting)

And red and white oak, cucumber magnolia, and wild black cherry. All of it to be cut off!

VOICES, rising

What can we do? Let's do something! Etc.

KIBLER

Afraid we can't raise enough money, men, to prevent this cutting.

HAAS

No, that's out of the question. And the state forestry division can't, either. It can be bought from the lumber buyer, I'm told, for about twenty-five thousand dollars.

KIBLER

That's too much money. The woods will just have to go.

HAAS

Yes, gentlemen, we can kiss the Pitt-Craft woods goodbye. But we can let it serve as a horrible example to the farmers of the county.

KIBLER

Yeah. Maybe they'll really wake up now!

HAAS

Gentlemen, there is one thing we can do -- the best thing I can think of to help us. We can lead the way and establish a farm forestry demonstration project under the Norris-Doxey act passed by Congress.

KIBLER

I'm for it a hundred percent, Charley. But before we get started on that I want to tell you a little story. I think this little personal story will illustrate how I feel about this business of managing our woodlands better. You all know Charlie Dambach, my son-in-law. You all know he came to live with me when he was half way through high school, just the same as though he was my own son, and then married one of my daughters. Well, ten years ago Charlie and I started a little study. He talked me into it. And I want to tell you about it...(FADE)...

SOUND: Outdoor woodland noises; birds, etc....

DAMBACH

You see, Dad, we should build a fence right along here to keep the cows out of the woods.

KIBLER

But Charley, this woods has been grazed for nearly 30 years.

DAMBACH

I know, Dad, and that's why no new trees are coming on. And the floor of the woods is like a park. Look here....it's all clean. The cows eat the new little seedlings. Their hoofs give the soil an awful beating.

KIBLER

But we need this woods for pasture.

DAMBACH

But Extension Forester Dean says woods doesn't make a good pasture, Dad. And the cows are damaging the sugar trees. When they die out, and with no new ones coming on, you won't have a crop of maple sirup.

KIBLER

Now you're beginning to make sense, Charlie. Maple sirup is too important around here to run the risk of losing it as a source of income.

DAMBACH

Then we can build the fence?

KIBLER

Yes, Charlie. I've got faith in your judgment. We'll build a fence to keep the stock out.

DAMBACH

Gee! That's swell, Dad! In a few years from now you'll see the difference! It won't look like the same woods....(FADE)....

KIBLER (fading in)

So you see, Gentlemen, we built a fence to keep the cows and horses out of my little 8-acre woods. The first couple of years didn't seem to make much difference. It was dry and I was short of pasture. I was tempted several times to turn the cows into the woods, but I didn't. Our patience was rewarded. In 1934 for the first time a few vigorous sugar maple seedlings put in their appearance. Each year thereafter a new crop of seedlings came in, and those already established stretched skyward. Each year during his vacations from college and later from work, Charlie and I visited the woods. Not long ago....(FADE).....

SOUND: Outdoor woodland noises, birds, etc....

DAMBACH

Doesn't look like the same woods, does it Dad?

KIBLER

I'll have to say it doesn't, Charlie. Just look at all these new trees!

DAMBACH

Yeah. From sample plot readings I can show that there are about 400,000 new trees in the woods. And they range from 4 inches high to 21 feet.

KIBLER

And every one of them has come up since we fenced out the stock.

DAMBACH

But a lot of other things have happened, too, Dad.

KIBLER

Yeah, I know.

DAMBACH

Just look across the fence here at a grazed woods.

KIBLER

I come out here a lot, just to notice the differences.

DAMBACH

Take wild flowers. Here in our protected woods I've identified 40 different kinds. In the grazed woods across the fence there are only 28 kinds of flowers.

KIBLER

Yeah, and birds, too.

DAMBACH

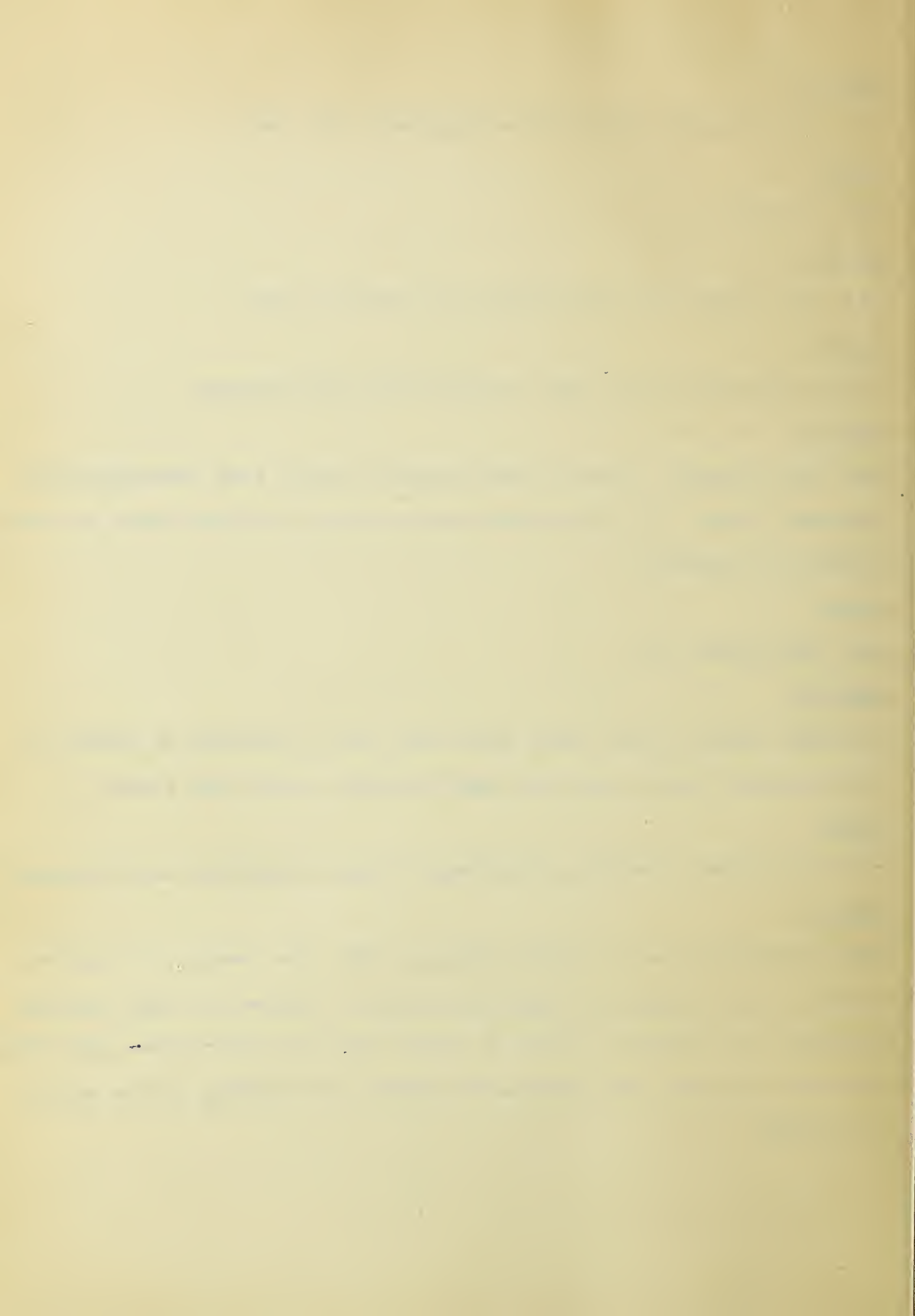
My latest census, Dad, shows that there are 19 species of birds in our protected woods, and only eight species across the fence.

KIBLER

And I've noticed, Charley, that Maple sirup production has increased.

DAMBACH

That's probably due to several things, Dad. One reason, of course, is some of the trees are bigger and older. Another is that keeping the stock out creates a cover of litter for the woods floor, and this holds the moisture, and reduces the depth of freezing in the winter
.....(FADE)



KIBLER (fading in)

That's my story, gentlemen. I hope I haven't bored you, but I wanted you to know what it has meant to me to manage my woods properly, so you can see what it will mean to you.

SOUND: Scattered applause from small group....

HAAS

Well Ernie, we certainly appreciate what you've said. (PAUSE) And now, gentlemen, what say we get busy and discuss a farm forestry demonstration project? I think we can get one through, and that'll give us the services of a trained forester, and a conservation farm planner.

VOICES

O. K., let's go; I'm ready, etc.....

ORGAN: Brief bridge

ANNOUNCER

The farmers of Geauga County went right ahead, after that meeting in January 1940, and by June 1 -- five months later -- the Northeast Ohio Farm Forestry Project was established. A trained forester, W. L. Goodwin, and a conservation farm planner, Lloyd Cook, were assigned to work with the farmers and with County Agent Charles Haas. Not long after these men arrived on the job.....(FADE)

SOUND: Barnyard noises....

GOODWIN

And here, Mr. Kibler, is your copy of the cooperative agreement. It's the very first one of this project.

KIBLER

And I'm proud to be the first one, Mr. Goodwin.

GOODWIN

I think you're going to like contour strip cropping for your cultivated land.

KIBLER

I know darn well I am. This field marked 12 on the aerial map here, I remember a few years ago when we had it in potatoes. Well, Charlie was home one July day when one heck of a storm came up.

GOODWIN

A gully-washer, eh?

KIBLER

Sure was. The rain came down in torrents. Charlie and I went out and the soil was washing down that slope a mile a minute.

GOODWIN

It'll do that every time.

KIBLER

We had a hay stack nearby. Charlie and I just couldn't stand to see that good soil washing away. So we pitched in, out there in the pouring rain.

GOODWIN

What'd you do? Stack hay in the path of the water?

KIBLER

Yeah. We dug out old hay, spread it out and stamped it down tight. Made sort of a hay dam.

GOODWIN

Did it work?

KIBLER

It helped out a lot. Soil piled up back of our emergency dam as deep as four feet.

GOODWIN

I don't think you'll have any more of that when you get those contour strips in.

KIBLER

I'm convinced of that.

GOODWIN

Not much need to talk about your woodland. You've done a good job with that. Main thing is to keep out the livestock, and to prevent fire. You've done that -- and a good job of it.

KIBLER

I'll need some help on what trees to harvest, and what to save for my needs on the farm.

GOODWIN

That's taken care of in the agreement, along with fertilizer and liming requirements, rotations, seeding, pasture treatments, and so forth.

KIBLER

You know, Mr. Goodwin, I've been working toward this complete farm plan by myself for a long time. Now I've got it, and I know it's right. And I know most of my friends in the county -- and in other counties -- are going to feel the same way.

GOODWIN

Glad to hear you talk like that, Mr. Kibler. It's mighty encouraging.

ORGAN: Sneak in appropriate music....

KIBLER

This is a small farm. I've had to make every acre produce even though I knew I wasn't doing right by the land lots of times. The things we've worked out together are simple things; they're easy to do, so easy that any farmer could do them. Now I can produce all I need, and I can save the soil and improve it from year to year. From now on, things are going to be different!

ORGAN: Up and out

ANNOUNCER

That's the true story of farmers of Geauga County, Ohio, the sturdy descendants of New Englanders who have banded together to conserve their woodlands, and their soil. This story was brought to you by the Nation's Station and the United States Department of Agriculture. And now, speaking for the Soil Conservation Service, is Hal Jenkins.

JENKINS

AD LIBS TO FILL NECESSARY TIME. And now, _____, Walter Lowdermilk's eleventh commandment.

ORGAN: Sneak in DEEP RIVER

ANNOUNCER

"Thou shalt inherit the holy earth as a faithful steward, conserving its resources and productivity from generation to generation. Thou shalt safeguard thy fields from soil erosion, thy living waters from drying up, thy forests from desolation, and protect thy hills from overgrazing by thy herds, so that thy descendants may have abundance forever. If any shall fail in this stewardship of the land thy fruitful fields shall become sterile stony ground and wasting gullies, and thy descendants shall decrease and live in poverty or be destroyed from off the face of the earth."

ORGAN: UP AND OUT.

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